

8 PM. No pets allowed. There is no admission fee. **Phone: 816-228-3766** 5:00 PM and noon to 5 PM on Sundays. Area Hours: 8 AM to Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 AM to mile north of I-70 on Hwy 7, one mile west on Park Road. The BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER is located one

Burr Oak Woods

Conservation Nature Center

Blue Springs, Missouri 64015 1401 NW Park Road

Phone: 816-228-3766 TDD: 816-655-6268 Fax: 816-655-6267

NATURE CENTER INTERPRETIVE

Lynn Youngblood **SUPERVISOR** *PROGRAM*

R. Craig Hensley

NATURALISTS

Shalena View Diane Neal Stephanie Acers Lisa LaCombe Sheri Medlock Carol Barclay Jenna Rhodes

CLERICAL

Lauren McCarthy, Office Supervisor

Joan Blackmon Paulette Ozias Gina Schafer

MAINTENANCE

Wayne Bass, Lead

David Bilyeu Jeremy Jones Rachael Butler Ed Miller

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MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

The Nutshell

1401 NW Park Road - Blue Springs, MO 64015



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Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center Volume 18 **September 2004** Number 09

BATIOZ

Escape to the wide-open grasslands!
Ride ahorse drawn wagon across the prairie! AT BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER

Visit with "Laura Ingalls Wilder" as portrayed by Susan Walsh



PRAIRIE CRITTERS QUILTING BEE

PRAIRIE PUPPET THEATER PRAIRIE

STORYTELLERS

GRASS PAPER-MAKING SEE THE

PRAIRIE CHICKEN DANCE! & BUFFALO SOLDIERS

> wildflower. Come one, come all for a grand day among the Make A Prairie Grass Doll & Toss A Bison Chip! of our prairie

Music and Dance for Everyone!

Missouri Town Band, Happy Time Pickers, Village Cloggers **Gum Spring Seranaders, Preston Tonepahhote Dancers!**



Saturday ~ Septem ber $18 \sim 9$ AM to 2 PM

Helping Missourians connect with nature and conserve it, too!



From the Tallgrass

I have been fascinated by prairies for all of my adult life. As a kid I don't remember people talking much about them, probably because I grew up in a county in southwest Iowa where the prairie had literally become extinct. I didn't know that at the time, but when I returned there after receiving my undergraduate degree and embarked on my career as a naturalist, I searched high and low and did not find a single acre of unplowed or undisturbed ground.

Sure I could find the occasional prairie plants in roadside ditches or other neglected areas, but a true prairie -- no. As is the case throughout tallgrass prairie country, whether in my home state or my new home in Missouri, finding true prairie is like searching for treasure; it's extremely rare but when found, yields all kinds of

wonderous things. Throughout Missouri many prairie treasures remain in bits and pieces in widely scattered remnants that are in the public domain. The Missouri Department of Conservation owns and/or manages more than 70 public prairies throughout the state, comprising in excess of 22,000 acres. That may sound like a small number, and it is, but it's 22,000 acres more than I found around my home county, also in the heart of the tallgrass prairie.

Many folks don't understand the fascination of prairie and indeed, if you don't get into the prairie, immerse yourself among the grasses and wildflowers and, most importantly, take your time to look and enjoy, you may not get it either. The prairie doesn't have the majestic tall trees of a forest or the crashing waves of an ocean shoreline. However, when you stand on a true prairie and watch the wind run through the grasses and listen to the tinkling song of the horned lark high overhead, you realize that the prairie is alive and much more than a "field." Add in the facts that the face of the prairie is an ever-changing palette of color and form, a place where the wind becomes part of you, a landscape where the sky is a big as all outdoors, and you begin to understand the immenseness of it all.

When I am on a prairie, my spirit is renewed, my soul cleansed. When I stand on a prairie I can imagine distant horizons where bison still roam, where the meadowlark's song signals a new day and where the wind sends shivers through the big bluestem. To get your own taste of the prairie and what life was once like, come on out to Prairie Day on Saturday, September 18 and we'll emmerse you in the prairie "life." From a visit with Laura Ingalls Wilder (as portrayed by Susan Walsh) to Native American dancers, old time music and dancing, to a variety of crafters, live animals, games, prairie wagon rides and hikes, you'll find something for every member of your family. And, for the first 2,000 visitors, Cosentino's Price Chopper Stores will provide a free lunch. Please make plans to join us and discover for yourself the magic of the prairie.

R. Craig Hensley

From the Tree Top will return in the October newsletter.

R. Craig Hensley
Interpretive Program Supervisor

Critter Corner

(Taxidea taxus)

- •The badger is a short, squat, medium sized mammal, with impressive claws.
- •Badgers have a voracious appetite, using their powerful front feet and claws to dig small burrows i

•These prairie mammals were nearly extirpated from Missouri by 1900. Today, they are a rare sight

- •Badgers have a voracious appetite, using their powerful front feet and claws to dig small burrows in their quest for dinner.
- •Their diet consists of small burrowing mammals such as ground squirrels, rabbits, and other rodents.

•They can dig much faster than a man can dig with a shovel. The dirt they dislodge is often kicked 4-5

 In the wild, badgers seldom drink water. They obtain the liquids that their body requires from the food that they eat.

They will also eat snakes, scorpions, and insects.

•Badgers are nocturnal hunters, but will often relax the day away by laying out in the sun at the entrance to their burrow.

~ Naturalist Notebook ~

| Growing a Prairie Garden

I remember the first time I looked out over a prairie. It was indescribable; all the bright colors, textures, and wildlife were so fascinating! At one time, tallgrass prairies covered 15 million acres of Missouri's land. Today, only 90,000 acres (less than 1/10th of 1%) remain. Fortunately, the Missouri Department of Conservation and other organizations and individuals have come to recognize the value of prairies and have taken many steps to protect those that remain.

sunlight a day.

The general public has also become aware of prairies through the beauty and diversity of colors and textures of the hundreds of prairie wildflowers. Today, prairie gardens have become popular among gardeners for their beauty and diversity, and for attracting butterflies and birds. Others plant natives for use as wild edibles or for medicinal purposes.

Over 800 different species can be found in Missouri's tallgrass prairies. A variety of adaptations, beginning with roots that can penetrate 15 feet or more into the soil, enable prairie plants to survive Missouri's cold winters,

hot summers, periodic droughts, and natural fires. These adaptations are precisely what attracts gardeners to plant these wildflowers in their gardens and

The first step in growing a prairie garden is to decide which native wildflowers or grasses you like best or which ones will attract the wildlife you desire. For example several species of milkweed attract a variety of butterflies, including monarchs. You will also need to decide where to put the garden. This area should have well-drained soil and receives at least six hours of

Then you will want to design a plan which includes the types of native plants, where they will go, any walkways, centerpieces, or borders to line the garden. Remember that many species can grow over three feet tall and may look like weeds to other people, so a nice border or any garden decorations will give it a good touch.

Patience is the key to growing a prairie garden. It may take up to three years in order for the garden to become established, but once mature your garden will give you years of viewing pleasure.

For more information about growing your own prairie garden, go to www.grownative.org. Grow Native is a program designed by the Missouri Department of Conservation to work on conserving native plants. I also recommend Native Landscaping for Wildlife and People by Dave Tylka. You can also go to the Missouri Department of Conservation website at, www.conservation.state.mo.us, to locate prairies throughout Missouri that are available for the general public to visit.

I encourage you to have fun designing and planting your own prairie garden. If you need ideas, please visit our gardens at Burr Oak Woods!

--Shalena View

-Natural Happenings-

- As the temperature grows colder, snakes begin to hibernate.
- Look to the skies. Monarch butterflies are beginning their long migration to Mexico.
- In preparation for a long cold winter, beavers are adding sticks and mud to lodges for extra insulation.
- Drivers beware: White-tailed deer are now in rut and will continue to breed through November.
- Dare to touch! The jewelweed seedpods are ripe and ready to explode at the slightest touch, thus leading to another of their common names: touch-me-not!.



for Special Accomplishment Volunteers Recognized

joining Volunteer-Naturalists Joe Polka, Donna Soper and Don These three individuals reached the 2,000 volunteer-hour milestone, Conservation at the August Commission meeting in Kansas City Baker were recently recognized by the Missouri Department of Volunteer Naturalists Jim Hawes, Jerry Montgomery and Joyce



working with audiences of every age and ability. the years to mention but a few. He also helps with school programs, public instrumental in our on-going fishing program, programs, skills camps and special events over Jim, a volunteer since 1996, has been

Jerry Montgomery, a 11-year volunteer veteran,

while being employed full-time. visited with countless weekend visitors, all bluebird trail monitoring, has led trail walks and provides volunteer efforts on special events,



volunteering in 1993 and has and fishing programs. assisting with special events, outdoors skills camp for both the general public and school groups, been a fixture here since then, leading nature hikes

Joyce Baker began

who help make Burr Oak Woods the special place every aspect of the nature center's success. We Each of these volunteers has helped in virtually congratulate these and all our dedicated volunteers

Final One for the Summer: Catch and Release Family Fishing: The

Saturday, September 11

9:00-11:00 a.m. Families (with children 5 and up)

What could be more enjoyable than to enjoy a warm summer

program. We provide all equipment, even The pond is fully accessible. Please and volunteers for a great time. the nature center. So join our staff experience is necessary for this jump start morning with your family at the fishin' hole? No must have a valid Missouri fishing the worms! Participants age 16-65 icense, which can be purchased at

call to register.

the programs offered by the Missouri Department Reed Memorial Wildlife Area. Be sure to call their of Conservation's Lake City Range and James A. We are pleased to let people know about several of numbers to register for these special programs.

Lake City Range Programs 816-229-4448

Grain Valley, Mo 64029 28900 E Argo Road

Basic Trap Shooting

Saturday, September 18, 9:00-11:00 a.m.

firearms. Register by calling 816-229-4448. old with accompanying adult. We can provide youth model through, firearm selection and more. Range time will put to skills of trap shooting. Classroom time will cover stance, follow practice what was shown in the classroom. Minimum age 12 year This is a class designed to introduce or help you refine the basic

Basic Bird Watching

Tuesday, September 21 3:30-5:30 p.m.

needed). Registration is required by calling \$16-229-4448. Join Craig, from Burr Oak Woods to discover which birds frequent binoculars and walking shoes (binoculars will be provided if identification. This will be an outdoors adventure so bring the Lake City Range vacinity and learn the seven keys to bird

Basic Archery Equipment Care

Thursday, September 23 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Registration is required by calling 816-229-4448. a last minute check so the big one doesn't get away. had an opportunity for that first shot. Either way your equipment Possibly by this class you have already missed your deer or haven't must be ready when you need it. Bring your archery equipment for

Memorial Wildlife Area 13101 Ranson Road James A. Reed 816-622-0900

Lees Summit, Mo 64082

National Hunting & Fishing Day

25 Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Shooting, trappers, archery and more. Please call 816-622-0900 kids fishing, trap shooting, dog training tips, Cowboy Action This is a fun family day of outdoor events occurring at James A. in the shooting sports and related activities. There will be free Reed in Lee's Summit. This event is to showcase family activities for more information.

Lewis and Clark

Corner



passing by present-day Jefferson City he wrote, "Butifull a such as these were found in almost every man's journal. peas of Land as ever I saw." It is not surprising that comments who was a member of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Wher the Missouri portion of the journal of Sergeant Charles Floyd "The Land is Good," was an often-repeated phrase found

tallgrass prairies was the beginning of the food chain that percent of its land (nearly 15 million acres) was covered by nutritionally, but aesthetically as well. way or another. The prairie appealed to the men not only insects. Most of these animals depend on the prairie in one groundhogs, raccoons, rabbits, snakes and many birds and to these large mammals, the expedition encountered wolves main source of meat through the state of Missouri. In addition ended in bison, elk, and deer, which were the expedition's Clark and their expedition. The vegetative diversity found in tallgrass prairie. This fact translated into food for Lewis and In the years before Missouri was a recognized state, forty

wildflowers and few shrubs or trees. What makes prairies so the many different species of wildflowers. breathtaking is the ocean of contrasting colors provided by Prairies are extensive grasslands with a diversity of

or pink flowers of shooting star and the delicate blue-eyed of what can be seen throughout a "prairie year." bring this floral play to a close. And these are only a sample prairie coreopsis and lavender heads of wild bergamot. As grass. Early summer brings forth the orange of butterfly and purple flowers of asters and the yellows of goldenrod and the magnificent pinks of the blazingstars. The lavender enter the grassland stage along with pale purple coneflower summer progresses, the yellow flowers of compass plant milkweed, waving white wands of prairie larkspur, yellow alexanders, the orange blossoms of hoary puccoon, the white be rewarded with the the parsnip-like flowers of golden Take a walk through a native prairie in the spring and you

Floyd in writing, "Butifull a peas of Land as ever I saw." every color under the sun. I would have to join Sergeant acres of dancing grasses and flowers representing almost prairies in a way that we can only imagine. They saw endles The Corps of Discovery witnessed Missouri's tallgrass

join us for a day-long trip to Paintbrush and Friendly Prairies or a free copy of "Public Prairies of Missouri." In addition, plan to native prairie remnants, stop by Burr Oak Woods and ask us for Saturday, October 2. See page 5 for details.) (Editor's Note: If you would like to know where to go and see

Music in the Woods Series Concert: Discovery String Band Saturday October 2nd

We are extremely pleased to announce that the Discovery String 6:00 p.m. All ages welcome

life of the Corps of Discovery and part of their introduction to native tribes of Discovery" concert on the lawn at Burr Oak Woods Conservation Band will be performing their "Lewis and Clark: A Musical Voyage born of and challenged by the frontier. Music was part of the daily Missouri valley join to tell this American tale of rugged individuals Nature Center on Saturday evening, October 2, beginning at 6 p.m. Five noted musicians steeped in the history and traditions of the

of the voyage, tunes and songs of the period and of the ethnic these people. heroic stories and stay true to the history and musical traditions of These troubadours also have composed original music that tell the traditions represented provide the musical context of the journey. While no specific musical title is mentioned in any of the journals

children and adults of all ages are invited. wonderful concert. Bring your blankets and lawn chairs and plan to Barton and Dave Para and Bob Dyer for an inspirational and have a grand time. No reservations are required for this concert and We hope you'll join us and musicians Paul and Win Grace, Cathy



Names from left to right are Bob Dyer, Dave Para, Win Grace Cathy Barton, Paul Grace. Photo by Leela and Ellie Grace

Lewis and Clark Trunks Available

to reserve a trunk today! plans are also included. Please call Lauren at 816-655-6263 x223 westward expansion and compare them to those of today. Lesson as they discover the importance of natural resources to the intermediate level 4th - 6th grade), which are available for one handle tools and materials similar to those the expedition carried, week check outs. These trunks will give students a chance to Burr Oak Woods has Lewis and Clark Educational Resource Trunks available (primary level kindergarten - 3rd grade and

0 Q

Program Registration

Please call **816-228-3766 (TDD 816-**655-6268) on or after the first of the before the program time. If you have possible so someone on the waiting to cancel, please call as soon as month to register for the FREE programs list on this page. It is important to arrive five minutes

Saturday

your chance! Come out and learn about snake? Well, now is face to face with a Have you ever been Reptiles Rock!

touch one too!?! Missouri and maybe he reptiles of Then we will head out in search of wild reptiles!

water. Please call to register. Note: dress for the weather, put on bug spray, bring

Time: 10:00-11:30 p.m. Ages: Families (children 0 and up)

Prairie Scavenger Hunt

water. Please call to register. Note: dress for the weather, put on bug spray, bring sheet as they discover the magnificence of prairies. up and hunt for clues given on the scavenger hunt prairies of Burr Oak Woods. Each family will team Get your family together and come explore the

Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m. Ages: Families (children 5 and up)

Homeschool:

Nature's Bounty: Natural Dyes

bring a white t-shirt. Please call to register. discover nature's palette! Please wear old clothes and all of these things in nature's bounty. Join us as we supply stores to buy materials to create art. They found they purchased their clothes. They did not have art In ancient times, people did not have stores where

Ages: 3-5 and 6-8 Times: 9:30-10:30 a.m. 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Ages: 9-11 and 12 and up Times: 9:30-11:00 a.m.

1:00-2:30 p.m.

10 Friday

Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Reptiles Rock!

discussed. Please call to register. What is a reptile? Using live snakes, we will explore and non-venomous identification will also be this a program you don't want to miss! Venomous some of the facts and myths of Missouri's slithery inhabitants. Up close viewing and touching will make

Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m. Ages: Families (children 5 and up)

10 Friday-11 Saturday

Take a Parent Camping Night! Conservation Kid's Club:

a few surprises. Participants must be an active ask for? Come out for a night of fun and maybe even time, new friendships, grand adventure, campfire stories, and delicious food! What more could you start our new year off with a bash! Quality family Hey gang! Our special night has finally arrived! Let's member of the Conservation Kid's Club to attend this event. Please call to register.

Time: 6:00 p.m. Friday thru 8:00 a.m. Saturday

Youth Bird Club

don't have them!) and be sure they dress for the 10 and older, then we're inviting them to join the Burr Oak Woods Youth Birding Club. We'll kick off our Please call to register. at 8 a.m. and return to the nature center by 10 a.m. or boots are a must. We'll leave for the hike promptly weather, keeping in mind long pants and sturdy shoes oculars and a field guide (we'll provide them if you 'north 40" of Burr Oak Woods. Have them bring binfall birding schedule with a bird walk through the Do you have a child interested in birds? If he or she is

Time: 8:00-10:00 a.m



See details on page 6. Please call to register. Family Fishing

Ages: Families (children 5 and up) Гіme: 9:00-11:00 а.m.

Adults Only:

bountiful prairie. Dress for the weather. Please brooms from material collected from the needed in order to survive. All worldly and provided families with everything that they Once upon a time, vast prairies covered our state the past. We will make beautiful wilderness possessions were a gift from the prairie. Step back Prairie Bountiful in time with us as we become the homemakers of

Ages: Adults 18 and up Time: 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Babes in the Woods

enjoy what nature has to offer. During this class outdoor discovery. Please bring a stroller. Please infant or toddler take steps down the path of we will share ideas and activities to help your Your child is never too young to be outside and call to register.

Ages: infant-2 years old Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Navigation Basics:

Map and Compass

travel in a straight line. navigate within the It is important for outdoor to become disoriented or the river. It is very easy We follow the terrain or hike or canoe, we do not wilderness. When we enthusiasts to be able to



to get lost. You cannot tools. By learning to use work without the proper

sure to bring water. Please call to register. with new found confidence and freedom! Dress a map and compass, you will be able to explore for the weather and being out out in the field be

Ages: Families (children 12 and up)

Our reptiles and amphibians will be available SEPTEMBER in our temporary building. for public viewing during the month of



8 7 8 77

Youth Deer Hunting Class



generations. In this two part program we will handed down through the tradition that has been tail deer. Deer hunting is a Get out of the city and step into the world of the white-

weather and for going out into the field. Please A Parent/adult is required to stay with youth and a sack lunch if you would like. Dress for the top experts in our state. Be sure to bring water opportunity for you to learn from some of the your own deer stand. This is an excellent deer, locate and interpret deer sign, and set up through lunch. call to register. We will meet at Lake City Range. learn about safety, how to handle a firearm, track

Time: 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

(location, setup, and safety) In the Field (signs, tracking) Deer Stand 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Firearm Safety and Handling a Firearm [2:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. (Burr Oak Woods) Sack Lunch

12 Sunday

Hike Club

sturdy boots. Please call to register. Join Burr Ooak Woods volunteers for their metropolitan area. Be sure to bring water and wear monthly hike to explore the natural world of the

Ages: Adults (18 and up)

Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m.

18 Saturday

Special Event Prairie Day

is required. See details on the front page. No registration

Ages: All Ages

Time: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

19 Sunday

Shroomin' Sunday Adults Only:

shroomin'. Please call to register. mushrooms and the do's and don't of learn about some of Missouri's edible hunting. Come out to Burr Oak Woods and Fall is one of the best times to go mushroom

Time: 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Ages: Adults Only (18 and up)

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Little Acorns:

What's Buggin

call to register. program. You won't want to miss this one! Please we will head out to catch a few. We will even get a will learn about what makes insects special and then chance to participate in the Monarch tagging creepy crawly friends Hey kids! Its time to get out and look for our favoritethat's right...INSECTS! We

Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m. Ages: 3-5

25 Saturday

Time: 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Adults Only: Fall Bird Walk

dress for the weather. Please call to register. vide these for those of you that don't have any) and Bring your binoculars and a field guide (we'll proforest migrants and Burr Oak Woods. We'll head out in search of fall for our regular monthly bird walk along the trails of Join Assistant Manager and Naturalist Craig Hensley early arriving winter visitors.

Ages: Adults (18 and up) Time: 7:30-9:30 a.m.

us as we sweep for these common animals in our

tall grass prairie and learn some basic insect

identification. Please call to register.

Ages: Families (all ages)

Time: 1:00-2:00 pm. or 2:30-3:30 p.m.

humans, but many of us are unaware of what kinds

There are more insects on the face of the earth than

Insect Identification

Missouri Conservation Frontiers:

of small creatures live in our own backyards. Join

Little Acorns:

What's Buggin You

program. You won't want to miss this one! Please chance to participate in the Monarch tagging makes insects special and then

Time: 10:00-11:00 a.m.

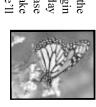
Adults Only:

Join Assistant Manager and Naturalist Craig Hensley

Paintbrush Prairie Trip

Monarch Mania!

as we capture, tag and release provide the nets and tags for this their way to central Mexico. We'll monarch butterflies as they make move and we're ready to begin The monarch butterflies are on the tagging them. Join us for the day



Age: Adults Only (18 and up)

join us! No pre-registration is required. events, everything is we'll include other butterfly activities including crafts the grown-ups. As w for the kids and a butterfly gardening program for for attending and participating. To complete the fun receive a beautiful monarch butterfly life cycle poster day of scientific fun. free so please make plans to ith all of our programs and Every participant will also

Time: 1:00-4:00 **Ages: Families** p.m.

25 Saturday

Tales n' Trails

and please call to register. celebrate the migration of the monarch butterfly. Joanne Ryder's Where Butterflies Grow as we world. We'll kick off this monthly program with children's nature literature together with the natural outdoors? Then you will want him/her to join us Does your child enjoy books? Does he/she like the southward migration. Please dress for the weather release monarchs as they make their long We'll even have the opportunity to capture, tag and for this new monthly program that brings Ages: 5-7 years

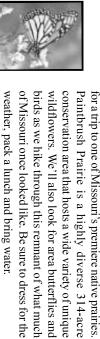
Ages: 11-15

8:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. (Lake City Range)

we will head out to catch a few. We will even get a creepy crawly friends...that's right...INSECTS! We Hey kids! Its time to get out and look for our favorite will learn about what

call to register.

Ages: 3-5



2 Saturday Discovery String Band Time: 8:00 a.m.-5 p.m.

Music in the Woods:

See details on page 3. No registration required. Ages: All Ages

Time: 6 p.m. start